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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 004968

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OIG
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STATE FOR ISP TEAM SEVEN
DAMASCUS PASS TO DOUGLAS ELLICE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/28/2012

TAGS: [ASIG](#) [AMGT](#) [CVIS](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: SURVEY OF NON-IMMIGRANT VISA ISSUANCE POLICIES

REF: STATE 154899

Classified By: CONSUL LES HICKMAN, REASON 1.5 (B) AND (D)

11. (U) The following is in response to reftel questions.

A) (S/NF) Law Enforcement and Intelligence Agencies
Represented at Post: ORCA, LEGATT, DIA, (STATE) DS

B) (S/NF) Visas Viper Information Input Process: Potential submissions are sent to the Visas Viper Coordinator (VVC) who in turn consults with the Consul. Then the submission is sent to the DCM in a draft Visas Viper cable for approval. The DCM either approves the submission or requests more information to ensure the case meets the guidelines for submission.

C) (S/NF) Frequency of Meetings: Visas Viper meetings are held monthly in accordance with State 140282.

D) (S/NF) Visas Viper meetings are chaired by the DCM.

E) (S/NF) Members Are: DCM, VVC, Consular Chief, A/RSO, and representatives from ORCA, DAO, LEGATT, POL, ECON and FBIS

F) (S/NF) Number of Names Submitted by Agency: In the last 12 months the VVC sent four cables to the Department from State representatives. ORCA, LEGATT and DAO submit names through their agencies and slug submissions for INR TIPOFF.

G) (S/NF) Quality/Effectiveness of Washington Visas Viper Support/Guidance: Post is satisfied with Washington's guidance and support for our contributions to the program. On more than one occasion the Department has sent kudos cables on our submissions. We also believe that timeliness of responses to Security Advisory Opinions and 00 hits could be improved.

12. (S/NF) Chief of Mission Oversight of the Process: The Chief of Mission has designated the DCM to oversee the Visas Viper activities. The DCM reports to the Chief of Mission all significant developments concerning the program. The Front Office has a close and continuing association with the members of the Visas Viper Committee, through Country Team meetings and other meetings outside of the Visas Viper process.

13. (S/NF) The Coordination Process at the Mission Section Level: Visas Viper representatives routinely consult with the VVC and Consular Chief concerning all operational issues of the program. The coordination effectiveness is excellent.

14. (S/NF) Post Officers from other than Consular/Intelligence/Law Enforcement Involved in the Visas Viper Program: Post Officers from POL, ECON, DAO and FBIS participate. POL and ECON track potential terrorist and terrorist financing issues respectively. DAO has sources of information appropriate for submission. FBIS and its monitoring of various information sources is also a good reference for submissions.

15. (S/NF) Occasions for Intelligence and Law Enforcement Agencies to Meet with Consular Staff Outside of the Visas Viper Meetings to Discuss Terrorist Threat Information: During Country Team and Emergency Action Committee meetings terrorist threat information is evaluated and reported as part of our review of the general security environment for the safety of Mission staff and the American community. Also ORCA consults with Consular staff directly concerning NIV applicants (Iraqis in particular) who may have intelligence value.

16. (S/NF) ORCA Officers in the Consular Section: Not applicable.

17. (S/NF) Frequency of Hits in CLASS Determined to be Terrorist Related: Within the last year there were no hits in CLASS that were terrorist related. It is Post policy for two Consular Officer to review a potential 00 hit to determine if it merits a Security Advisory Opinion (SAO). If

two officer agree, then an SAO is sent. In case there is difficulty with a consensus, the case is brought to the Consular Chief for a decision prior to sending an SAO.

18. (S/NF) Requests from Mission Officer/Offices to Issue Visas in Cases Involving Terrorist CLASS Hits: Post did not have any occasion (within the past two years of Consular Chief's tenure) when an office, officer, or other section/agency requested visa issuance for a terrorist CLASS hit. We are not aware of any terrorist related visa requests by Mission offices for applicants not found in CLASS.

19. (S/NF) Decision on the Disposition of These Requests and Review of the Decisions: In the event such a request is made, the requesting Agency/Section must consult with the Consular Chief and DCM. If a decision is made to support the visa issuance, Post would submit an SAO with a recommendation for issuance under national security or other appropriate justification.

10. (S/NF) Were Visas Issued to Applicants with Possibly Disqualifying Information Linking them to Terrorism? All issued visas cases cleared the CLASS namecheck system in compliance with Visa Lookout Accountability guidelines. Last year Post issued a potential CLASS hit. The Consular officer made a determination that the potential hit was not valid because the applicant was a female and the CLASS entry was a male. Subsequent review of the case revealed that the applicant was an immediate relative of the CLASS entry with potential terrorist ties. The applicant's visa was revoked but she attempted to enter the U.S. and INS denied her entry. In cases where subsequent information is available that leads to visa ineligibility, Post initiates the revocation of the visa and makes every attempt to physically cancel the visa.

11. (S/NF) Does the Consular Section Maintain a Special Lookout File? All information located in the Consular Section must be unclassified. There is an A-Z file with Post information; however, since the files are unclassified this information would not be terrorist related.

12. (S/NF) Please Provide Additional Comments on How to Improve the Visas Viper Process: Post agrees that an effective Visas Viper program is essential. We periodically bring the program to the attention of the Country Team as a reminder of the Mission's responsibilities under the program.

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